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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 157
By Herron

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the Merrell family of Benton County for their meritorious service in the United States Armed Forces.

WHEREAS, our country was conceived by individuals willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure this nation's freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to have so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continued this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service in the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, the Merrell family has served with courage and gallantry and deserves proper recognition for their heroism both in Vietnam and in society today; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Merrell, Eddie Merrell, Carl Douglas Merrell, Gary Merrell, James Leslie Merrell and Lowell Howard Merrell all volunteered to serve in the tradition of Tennessee Volunteers; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Merrell of Martin served in the Tennessee Army National Guard from July 13, 1956 - May 30, 1957, the Air Force from May 31, 1957 - July 31, 1961 and the U.S. Army from August 30, 1961 - July 23, 1964. He served four tours in Vietnam, where he was wounded in action; and

WHEREAS, Master Sergeant Raymond Merrell was awarded the Combat Action Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the National Defense Medal and two Bronze Stars; and

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WHEREAS, Eddie Merrell of Rogersville served 8 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He served one tour in Vietnam, where he was wounded in action; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Eddie Merrell was awarded the Combat Action Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal and the National Defense Medal; and

WHEREAS, Carl Douglas Merrell of Kenton served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1966-69 and from 1974-80 and was wounded in action in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, Carl Douglas Merrell served in the 3rd Reconnaissance battalion, which was one of the evacuation units that saw duty in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, for his courageous efforts, Carl was awarded the National Defense Medal, the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal and the Purple Heart; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Gary Merrell of Danville served in the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne from 1966-69 and was wounded in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, because of his gallant efforts, Sergeant Gary Merrell received the Combat Action Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the National Defense Medal, the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star; and

WHEREAS, Private James Leslie Merrell of Faxon served in the U.S. Marine Corps from April 1, 1971 - May 28, 1971; he was honorably discharged as a result of a physical disability and was awarded the National Defense Service Medal; and

WHEREAS, Lance Corporal Lowell Howard "Ootie" Merrell of Benton County served in the Tennessee Army National Guard from December 1, 1960 - October 8, 1961 and performed his basic training in the U.S. Army from February 18, 1961 - August 17, 1961; and

WHEREAS, Corporal Merrell joined the U.S. Marine Corps on October 9, 1961 and served in the 1st Force Reconnaissance Company; and

WHEREAS, at age 21, Lowell "Ootie" Merrell was killed in action on the beaches of the Song Tra Bong River in Vietnam on April 23, 1965; and

WHEREAS, because of his valiant efforts on the battlefield, Lowell Merrell received the National Defense Service Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal and the Purple Heart; and

WHEREAS, the heroic achievements of these six brave men were a great source of pride for their parents, Alice and Howard Merrell; and

WHEREAS, it is only fitting that this General Assembly pause to honor the bravery and devotion of this special family and recognize the dedication that these six brave men have evidenced; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend the Merrell family from Benton County for their meritorious service in the United States Armed Forces and offer our thanks for a difficult job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.